



High Ground Organics

Community Supported Agriculture

Week 2, March 22nd and 23rd, 2017

Happy Spring! by Jeanne Byrne

This first day of spring is being ushered in with yet more rain, making for a wet harvest day. Steve was on the tractor dawn to dusk through the weekend getting ground worked up and compost spread in advance of the storm. He wasn't the only one. Some nearby farms have had tractors working through the night.

It seems that this frantic push to get ground ready to plant while it's dry enough to get a tractor in was worth the trouble, since this rain is panning out to be a substantial storm with an even wetter system forecast for the end of the week.

All the rain has somewhat hampered our spring production schedule. We've managed to get quite a few crops planted over the past two months in between the rainstorms, but most of them need some more time and sunshine to mature. The strawberries are going to be quite late this year. The plants look good and healthy, but they are not setting fruit yet. The wait will make them that much more welcome when they arrive!

Most of the year we fill the boxes with the produce we grow and harvest from our own fields. However, in the lean days of early spring, and particularly this year, we bring in some goodies from other local small farms to round out our boxes. We are lucky to be surrounded by a thriving small scale organic agriculture community. While nobody has a lot coming in right now, we are able to tap an item or two from several different sources. Your box this week will have items from Heirloom Organic Gardens, Far West Fungi, Everlasting Gardens, and Coke Farm.

Veggie Notes, by Jason Johnson

Always rinse produce before use. Everything should be refrigerated.

Gone are the weeks of peeling butternut squash, peering out your window, and longing for all things green and yellow and blue and beautiful. Spring is here, and it time to remember what life is like without seasonal depressive disorder. Arise, people of the earth, arise and eat your veggies!

Mustard greens are a vegetable that I have always been skeptical of. My grandmother ate them emphatically and was prone to overcook most things. Often, this beautiful and versatile leaf would be steamed for what must have been hours and served with a piece of pork that could just as well been used to break in to a car. As I grew older, though, I realized just how much I love this modest leaf. Its pepperness and

spice are profiles not easily attained and can be used much the same as horseradish. My grandmother was not wrong to pair it with pork and it goes fantastic with roast beef. Recently, a customer at the farmers market bought a pound of it to put on roast beef sandwiches. I almost hugged them. As for cooking notes, less is definitely more. When adding to a sauté, add at the very end, as it wilts and loses flavor at an alarming rate. Also, because these particular greens are so young and sweet, I have been adding them to dishes raw. This is particularly good in salads and on sandwiches.

When it comes to **mei-quin choi**, I am pretty set in my ways. Although it is a versatile veggie worthy of experimentation, I tend to only cook it one way. First I crank a skillet up on med-high heat and oil it. Then I just chop the **choi** in half lengthwise and cook it face down until caramelized. Salt and pepper to taste. The important part here is to not flip it. As soon as it is deep brown on the bottom, I remove it from the skillet and plate it. This keeps the veggie al dente and ensures minimal wilting of the tops, making it a beautiful, as well as tasty, addition to your plate. I like to pair mine with rice and **mushrooms**. I cook the **mushrooms** much the same, cutting them in half and sautéing them on medium heat in a small amount of oil. The trick to good **mushrooms** is not crowding the pan and not stirring them too much, giving them ample room and time to brown up.

For a nice salad, I like to use my cheese grater (the side with the big holes) to grate a raw **beet** and a couple of **carrots** in a bowl. Mix in that bunch of **arugula** and any spinach you might have left over and top with chopped **garlic chives**. Dress with the vinaigrette of your choice and eat the whole thing right out of the bowl while standing at the counter. Cancel your dinner plans and watch Netflix. See you next week!

In The Box

Mustard Greens

Arugula

Mei Quin Choi

Scotch Kale*

Garlic Chives*

Red Beets*

Shiitake Mushrooms*

Carrots*

All produce is certified organic. Garlic chives are from Everlasting Gardens. Mushrooms are from Far West Fungi. Carrots are from Heirloom Organics. Beets and Kale are from Coke Farm. All other vegetables and fruit were grown by High Ground Organics. Note: last minute substitutions may be made.

Chef's Notes, by Andrew Cohen

This week sees **garlic chives** in the box, which are little used here in the US. Originally from China, they have spread throughout Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, Nepal, India, Korea, and the rest of the world. Besides China, Korea seems to have a very large group of dishes that take advantage of the garlicky-oniony flavor that does not carry the same heat that clove garlic does. Look for these chives in dim sum, pancakes similar to scallion pancakes, stir fries, soups with thin noodles, in gyoza, and even in pickles such as some forms of kimchee. They also pair well with potatoes. This week I put them in

each recipe offered up. They flavor a creamy dressing for a beet, arugula salad with nuts and cheese, and the dressing can work with lots of other things as well. If it works with ranch it'll work with the Creamy **Garlic Chive** dressing as well.

Garlic chives appear more traditionally in a stir-fry of **mei-quin choi** and **mustard** with onions. They are also used as the main seasoning for a braise of **carrots**. This braise can be served "dry"-cooked so there is almost no liquid left and glazed with butter- or wet, with plenty of broth left and grains or pasta in the bowl. This same dish, with a little tweaking can have **scotch kale** added in, or can be turned into a filled pasta like a ravioli or a wonton.

You could also slice and pound out a pork tenderloin and then fill it with **garlic chives** and blanched **mustard green**, then roll it up, truss it, then roast it for a wonderful entrée. The **mustard greens** can also be cooked low and slow with bacon, but they are mild enough to be added to a salad as well. Try **mustard**, **arugula**, shredded **carrots** and quickled **beets**, and some late season apples for a nice mélange of flavors.

Thinking of **beets**, I recently attend a party where Red Velvet Brownies were a hit. They were made with **beets** for coloring, and they gave the brownies an extra hit of moisture, as well. They really were great, and the color seemed a natural red rather than the startling red some confections of that name acquire. Apparently, during WWII, when foodstuffs were rationed, red food color was harder to come by, so industrious homemakers began using boiled **beet** juices for color things that needed some red coloring.

Saute of Mei-Quin Choi, Mustard Greens, and Garlic Chives, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 bunch mei-quin, leaves and stalks separated, stalks cut lengthwise ¼ inch, leaves cut ½ inch, washed and dried and kept separate	1 bunch mustard greens, stemmed, washed and dried, sliced into ½ inch strips
1 med-small onion, brown or white, Lyonnaise cut (radially) into 1/8th inch or a little bigger	¼ cup of garlic chives diagonally sliced into ¼ x 1 inch
¼ in piece of ginger, thinly sliced into coins, then coins sliced into very thin sticks	¼ tsp. freshly ground coriander seed
1 tsp. soy sauce, preferably shiro (white), artisanal, or low sodium	¼ cup orange juice
Pepper to taste (and salt if needed, although the soy should eliminate that need)	Neutral flavored high-heat oil such as grapeseed, avocado, as needed
1 TBS low-moisture butter cut into pea-sized bits.	

Heat a wok or very wide -12 to 14 inch- sauté pan or chef's pan over high heat.

When pan is hot, film with a decent amount of oil. When oil thins and appears to shiver, carefully add the onion. Stir and toss constantly, trying to soften the onions without coloring them. When they seem halfway to being softened and "clear", add the mei-quin stalks and toss to coat with oil. Cook, continuing to toss and stir to avoid burning. The stalks should turn to a brighter, jade-like green, and the onions should be unbrowned and translucent.

Make a well in the center of the pan, add a touch of oil, then the ginger. When fragrant with ginger, toss to blend in with the vegetables.

Add in the mustard and mei-quin leaves, and immediately toss using tongs to combine with the rest of the ingredients. Do this until the leaves and mustard start to wilt. Drizzle with the soy sauce, followed by the orange juice, then scatter the coriander seed over all. Add the garlic chives to the greens and mix in. Everything should become aromatic at this point. Toss and turn the vegetables so they combine well and get flavorings all over them.

As soon as the leaves begin to wilt and no longer appear raw, use tongs to transfer the vegetables to a bowl or platter, allowing all liquid to drain off and stay in the pan. If there is a lot of liquid, reduce until there is around 1-2 ounces in the bottom of the pan. At this point, your butter bits should still be cold (if working in a hot kitchen, keep butter bits in frig. or freezer). Take 3-4 at a time and toss into the pan liquid. Swirl the pan using the handle, dropping in butter just before the last piece added melts. When the sauce is emulsified, stop adding butter and drizzle sauce over the vegetables. Give a final toss to get sauce over everything, then serve. Serves: 4

Braised Carrots with Garlic Chives, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 bunch carrots, trimmed, scrubbed or peeled, cut into 1 inch lengths, or ½ inch thick rounds if the diameter exceeds 1 inch	1 small brown or white onion -enough to yield ½ cup- Lyonnaise sliced ¼ wide
2-3 whole garlic chives + 3 more, sliced on the diagonal 1 inch by ¼ inch	½ tsp. fresh oregano or marjoram leaves, finely chopped
Salt and pepper to taste	Light flavored olive oil or grapeseed oil as needed
Butter as needed, around ½ – 1 TBS	Water as needed

Heat a 2½ sauteuse or chef's pan over medium heat. When the pan is hot, film it with oil. When the oil is hot, add the carrots and toss to coat with the oil. Cook gently just until the carrots begin to pick up a golden color. Add the onions and cook until they are translucent, but not coloring.

Add half the oregano or marjoram, the whole garlic chives, and water to just even with the top of the carrots. Bring to a boil, skim any scum that might rise to the surface, then lower the heat to a simmer.

Cook until the carrots are just cooked through. A sharp thin-bladed knife should be able to go all the way through a carrot piece, but there should be a faint resistance. If you reach this point and there is still a lot of liquid still in the pan, remove the carrots with a slotted spoon to a dish and cover to keep warm. If there is only a quarter cup or so, leave them in the pan. Don't worry about the onions. Remove the whole chives and discard. Turn heat to medium-high and reduce the pan liquid if necessary to ¼ cup or a little less. Add the rest of the oregano/marjoram and the cut garlic chives. Return the carrots to the pan and toss to coat. Add ½ tablespoon butter to the pan and swirl until the butter melts and emulsifies with the pan liquid. The carrots should have a nice glaze to them. If not, add another ½ TBS butter and swirl to emulsify and coat. When the carrots have a nice glaze, season with salt and pepper and serve hot. Serves: 4